



# Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta

*To Protect, Promote, Bring to Life, Implement, and Sustain the True Spirit and Intent of Treaty No. 8 as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the waters flow.*

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### Treaty 8 Chiefs Stand In Solidarity With Elsipogtog

*Edmonton, Alberta – October 18, 2013* – The recent protesting by Elsipogtog First Nation in Rexton, New Brunswick over fracking and shale gas development has erupted in violence. “We [Treaty 8 Chiefs of Alberta] support both the Elsipogtog community and leadership in this situation,” states Richard Kappo, Grand Chief of Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta.

“Having our [Treaty 8] communities traditional territory in one of the most heavily resource developed areas in Canada, we know the outrage and frustration that the Elsipogtog Nation is experiencing, in fact, I am sure every First Nation community across Canada has an idea of that same frustration. Canada can no longer unilaterally cast aside our Aboriginal Title, Rights and Treaty Rights,” states the Chief Trevor Mercredi, the Livelihood Portfolio Chief of Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta.

The Chiefs of Treaty No. 8 [Alberta] are no strangers to the consultation process either. For the past two years, First Nations in New Brunswick have been attempting to work within the confines of a restrictive, compartmentalized consultation process. “Their consultation process is completely unworkable because, at its’ very core, it runs counter to First Nations’ customs and traditions. This approach to consultation has failed. Our own anger stems from the fact that the Alberta consultation process is similar in many ways,” states Chief Mercredi.

The situation spiraled rapidly out of control when the RCMP were called in to stop the protests. “We have a group of protesters, concerned about the environment and being able to continue to practice the same traditional lifestyle that their ancestors enjoyed. Heavy-handed tactics from the RCMP are not needed in this situation and only cause things to escalate, as clearly happened,” says Chief Mercredi.

There have been numerous protests in Treaty 8 territory over the last few years. “Ideally, we are always looking for ways to peacefully resolve situations but we cannot allow destructive resource extraction to continue in our traditional territory. We need to take action to actually stop the environmental degradation for future generations. That’s what Elsipogtog is trying to do and so we stand with them,” states Chief Mercredi.

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